

VOTE - Voter Outreach Through Education  
Washington Secretary of State

**CURRICULUM GRADES K-4****TEACHER: LESSON 4****THEME: CITIZEN IMPACT AND THE EFFECT ON THE COMMUNITY**

Engaging students in discussions about voting is an excellent way to help them move from shallow to deep thinking, and to demonstrate the higher order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The exercises below are designed to help students internalize the importance of voting so they are more likely to become active voters when they reach adulthood.

**Tasks:**

1. Participates in civic discussions.
2. Identifies and analyzes the role of government in community decision-making.
3. Explains the roles of citizens in community decision-making.

**ACTIVITIES:**

Bring in speakers to discuss how individuals or small groups of people have had an impact on the community. Examples might be 1) having a stop sign erected at a busy intersection; 2) having the speed limit reduced; 3) determining what kinds of business/industry comes into the city. (Citizens in one New England town prevented a Wal-Mart from coming into their community. They were afraid it would change the personality of their town, and would put local merchants out of business. They forced a vote, which was very close, but kept the store from coming in.)

Ask students to conduct polls of their fellow students, parents, or others in the community. Let them vote to determine the topic. Examples might include: favorite TV program, favorite video game, the amount of time spent on homework, the number of people who were born in the state. There is almost no limit to topics for polling people. When they have completed their polling, and the results are in, lead a class discussion about the results. What does this tell us about our school or community? What differences might you expect between a community where nearly everyone was born there, and one in which nearly everyone moved there from somewhere else?